

**To: All Trustees**

**From: Tom Davis**

**RE: Follow-up on Johnson Center issue—actions taken/media report**

**Chancellor Hawkins has asked that I share with you the following information:**

**In light of recent social media actions/statements by faculty members aligned with the Johnson Center for Political Economy at Troy University, Dr. Judson Edwards, Dean of the Sorrell College of Business, has taken the following actions, sanctioned by the Chancellor:**

- 1. A “refocus” of the mission and activities of the center faculty to concentrate solely on teaching and academic research and service.**
- 2. A 90-day moratorium on public policy pronouncements/opinion writing or any other activities that can be construed as political activism. Dean Edwards has indicated that he will consider strongly extending this moratorium to ensure the new focus for the Center is implemented in full.**
- 3. The appointment of a new chair of the Department of Economics and Finance, who will be a member of the finance faculty rather than the economics faculty. Dr. George Crowley, who made the comments that brought about this controversy, was scheduled to serve as the Department Chair, but that appointment has been cancelled.**

**In addition, on Thursday afternoon the Chancellor and Dean Edwards granted an interview request by Mike Cason of [AL.com](http://AL.com)./Birmingham News. In this interview:**

- Chancellor Hawkins stated emphatically that TROY takes issue with any characterization as a “third-tier” institution, citing many University accomplishments and honors.**
- Chancellor Hawkins made it clear that TROY supports the mission and goals of the RSA and Dr. David Bronner and that there is no attempt on Troy University’s part or the Johnson Center’s part to “bring down” the state retirement system. Dr. Hawkins emphasized the many positive economic development activities of the RSA, to include the RTJ Trail and the buildings in downtown Montgomery.**
- Chancellor Hawkins and Dean Edwards emphasized that the Koch Foundation does not play a role in forming policy, hiring faculty or in any way determining the direction of the Johnson Center or the Sorrell College of Business.**
- The Chancellor did stress that TROY supports the academic freedom of its faculty members to research, publish and discuss issues of public and scholarly concern. However, conclusions drawn by**

faculty members through their research reflect only the opinion and viewpoints of the respective faculty members.

- Dean Edwards pointed out that one of the goals in establishing the Manuel H. Johnson Center for Political Economy in 2010 was to reestablish the economics major at TROY. Faculty affiliated with the Johnson Center, along with other faculty within the Sorrell College of Business, created the current economics academic curriculum, which has become one of the most popular degrees in the College of Business, with more than 100 students currently majoring in it. Further, it is not accurate to say that faculty were “disinterested” in economics; the field was not the College of Business’ primary focus in the years prior to 2010. The creation of the Johnson Center was an opportunity to restore the College of Business as a home for the research and study of economics.

- Dean Edwards also pointed out that faculty affiliated with the Johnson Center were hired in the same manner as faculty within all academic units at TROY and subject to the same process of review and approval.